



Jesus Is Accused and Sentenced to Death (Luke 23 - Good News Translation)

Pilate called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, "You brought this man to me and said that he was misleading the people. Now, I have examined him here in your presence, and I have not found him guilty of any of the crimes you accuse him of. Nor did Herod find him guilty, for he sent him back to us. There is nothing this man has done to deserve death. So I will have him whipped and let him go.".... But they shouted back, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" So Pilate passed the sentence on Jesus that they were asking for.... Two other men, both of them criminals, were also led out to be put to death with Jesus. When they came to the place called "The Skull," they crucified Jesus there, and the two criminals, one on his right and the other on his left. Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing.".... One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? You received the same sentence he did. Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!" Jesus said to him, "I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me."

Romans 3 – All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 6 – The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5 – While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

We all have fallen short of God's standard and have no chance of attaining right standing before Him (through our own efforts or performance). Because of God's Grace and Love for us, He sent His son Jesus who came as a man without fault. He was punished and died in our place, through Him we now have the ability to stand before God in complete peace - fully forgiven. In John chapter 6, someone asked Jesus what works God requires of us, Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one He has sent."

Our relationship with our Father in heaven is not dependent on how well we perform or how good we are, instead it is based on how good Jesus is and on His performance – scripture tells us that "in Him, God is well pleased." The wages of our sin is death, but Jesus paid that debt for us. He was punished in our place (he had done no wrong) – Jesus did not come to accuse or condemn, but to save.

Romans 10 – If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved....With your heart you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Our pleasing God is dependent only on our ability to receive a free gift – (of Jesus and his sacrifice for us). If you believe in your heart that Jesus died in your place, and ask Him to be your Savior, your sins – past, present and future will be completely forgiven, God will not hold your sin against you, when he looks at you he will see his Son in you. This is what the Bible calls Grace - this means that because of God's love for us we now are able to receive what Jesus deserves instead of what we deserve.

Would you believe in the One He has sent? If so, like the thief on the cross go ahead and call out to God, receive Jesus as your Savior - declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved.